

EDITOR'S MISCELLANY



COMMITTEE ON TUBERCULOSIS

THE last report of the New York City Committee on Tuberculosis is full of evidence of practical work. The cases cared for have numbered 150, out of 208 cases examined, 58 of which were not subjects for the committee. In the disposition of the cases 48 were sent to hospitals, 13 to sanatoria, 2 to convalescent homes, and 47 (32 of whom were children) to the country; 12 were directed to dispensaries, and 6 were compulsorily removed by the health officers as dangerous to their locality.

Better rooms were provided for 20 cases, rooms cleaned in 9, Tenement House Department notified in 2, suitable occupation found for 8, and general relief secured for 85. Careful statistical records are kept, for it is daily more evident that conditions of living and of labor are all-important.

For constructive work the Committee is advancing on the following lines.

On February 23, the Committee on the Prevention of Tuberculosis passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the Chairman shall appoint a sub-committee to report to this Committee a general scheme for the care of tuberculosis in New York City."

The Chair appointed the following Committee: Dr. Janeway, chairman; Dr. Biggs, Dr. Bryant, Mr. Devine, Mr. Folks, Dr. James, Dr. Knopf, Dr. Thompson, Mr. Cox ex officio.

Three meetings were held by the Committee as a result of which it was decided that an inquiry and report should be made to the General Committee on the following subjects:

1. A general hospital board to be composed of the present Bellevue Board with an addition of representation from the Department of Health.
2. The minimum number of hospital beds required for the next five years, in addition to those now existing.
3. The desirable size and general type of hospitals for the treatment of tuberculosis.
4. The location of such hospitals, having in mind particularly climate, accessibility and cost of transporting supplies.
5. Types of cases to be distributed to hospitals and the method of selection and transfer of these cases.
6. A general plan for the administration and government of municipal dispensaries.

7. The relation of municipal to private dispensaries and of tuberculosis dispensaries to general dispensaries.
8. Size and equipment of dispensaries.
9. The number and location of dispensaries and whether they should be distinct and separate or parts of general dispensaries.
10. Proper organization of a dispensary.
11. Extent, restriction and methods of distribution of special diet.
12. Dispensary districts.
13. Observation of dispensary and hospital cases after discharge.
14. Furnishing of assistance through employment, etc.
15. District nursing.
16. Home care of cases.

The Committee has also from time to time passed the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the transfer of cases of tuberculosis from general hospitals in the city to tuberculosis hospitals should be placed in the control of the Department of Health, and that as a part of such a plan inspectors from said Department should regularly visit these city hospitals to assign their patients to the proper tuberculosis hospitals, and further that the transfer should be effected by the ambulances of the hospitals from which the patients are taken.

Resolved, That the hospital care of all tuberculous cases should as soon as possible be placed under the control of one Department, excepting such cases as require forcible removal and detention, which cases should be cared for by the Department of Health.

Resolved, That whereas it has been shown by the estimates prepared by the Department of Health that there are in the city of New York 51,874 persons having tuberculosis in a recognizable form and whereas, the present number of hospital beds for the care of the tuberculous in this city at present is 2,315;

Resolved, That this Committee calls attention to the urgent and immediate need of additional hospital accommodations for all classes of tuberculous patients.

An article on State Registration by Lizzie M. Cox, of Indiana, gives an excellent history of the movement for registration at home and abroad. She quotes in the beginning Bacon's words: "I hold every man a debtor to his profession from the which, as men of course do seek countenance and profit, so they ought of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amend, to be a help and ornament thereto."

She closes with this broad outlook: "We must all remember that state registration is not a question that merely affects nurses. It is a part of a movement toward the betterment in general education. It is a part of the movement to elevate women by fitting them for the better performance of their duties. It is a part of the effort to develop the human race and bring it to a nobler type. It is not only a nurses' affair, it is a question of the age, an educational question, a question for woman, for the public, and a part of human advancement."

TRAGIC RESULTS OF ILL FEEDING

As in all human problems, ignorance plays an important role in the great problem of childhood's suffering and misery. The tragedy of the infant's position is its helplessness; not only must he suffer on account of the misfortunes of his parents, but he must suffer from their vices and from their ignorance as well. Nurses, sick visitors, dispensary doctors, and those in charge of babies' hospitals tell pitiful stories of almost incredible ignorance of which babies are the victims. One child was given cabbage by its mother when it was three weeks old; another, seven weeks old, was fed for several days on sausage and bread with pickles! Both died of gastritis, victims of ignorance. In another New York tenement home a baby less than nine weeks old was fed on sardines with vinegar and bread by its mother. Even more pathetic is the case of the baby, barely six weeks old, found by a district nurse in Boston in the family clothes-basket, which formed its cradle, sucking a long strip of salt, greasy bacon and with a bottle containing beer by its side. Though rescued from immediate death, this child will probably never recover wholly from the severe intestinal disorder induced by the ignorance of its mother. Yet it is doubtful whether the beer and bacon were worse for the baby than many of the patent "infant foods" of the cheaper kinds commonly given in good faith to the children of the poor. If medical opinion goes for anything, many of these "foods" are little better than slow poisons. Tennyson's awful charge is still true—

"The spirit of murder works in the very means of life."

Nor is this spirit of murder confined to the concoction of "patent foods" which are in reality patent poisons. The adulteration of milk with formaldehyde and other base adulterants is responsible for a great deal of infant mortality, and its ravages are chiefly confined to the poor. Mr. Nathan Straus, the philanthropist whose pasteurized milk depots have saved many thousands of baby lives during the past twelve years, has not hesitated to call this adulteration by its proper name, child murder.—*John Spargo.*

A NURSE who sends the following report of the new boat of the Boston Floating Hospital says: "Owing largely to Dr. Hastings' article in the April number of *THE AMERICAN JOURNAL*, I applied at the Boston Floating Hospital. The lecture course is fine and the preparation of milk is exactly what I have felt a need of."

On August 15th the new Floating Hospital, with eighty permanent and one hundred and ten day patients aboard, made its first trip.

Although the barge Clifford has proved a useful old craft for this hospital work, there is no comparison between her and the new boat. The latter is fitted with every convenience for the handling of patients, has an abundance of room and is far better in every way.

The new boat is 171 feet long, with 44 feet beam. The hull is of steel, and the superstructure of wood. The hull is provided with seven water-tight compartments, and the boat is amply supplied with apparatus for use in case of fire. In order that the boat could be put in service this season the self-propelling machinery was not installed, but will be put in by next season. The boilers, however, have been put in for heating purposes. For the remainder of this season the boat will be towed. There are four decks—the main deck, the hospital deck, the out-patients' deck and the pilots' deck. Ventilation, heating, refrigerating apparatus, dining-rooms and other necessities have been provided for. The cost of this new boat, fully equipped, will be about \$100,000.

Through the generosity of the people of Boston, nearly one-half of the cost of the new boat has already been subscribed.

Manager G. Loring Briggs, who is practically in charge of the work, made arrangements whereby babies not ill were allowed to take trips on the hospital ship. This was in cases where a mother had a sick child and no means of having anyone to care for the well one while she was caring for the sick one. It has been proven that this is but another means of accomplishing good, for in such a case, where a child may be practically well, the day's outing tends to strengthen the vitality of the child and also save the mother from considerable worry by having all her children under her protection.

Efforts are being made to increase the fund for this work, and when such a time arrives arrangements will be perfected whereby the hospital ship may, at other seasons, be kept in commission until the latter part of October.

THE multiplication of bacteria in milk is very rapid. One sample of milk showed 520 bacteria to the cubic centimetre in the pail, as drawn from the cow,—after straining and cooling, these had increased to 3,100; after keeping at a temperature of 50° F. for fourteen hours, to 35,000; after keeping at 80° for fourteen hours, to 420,000.